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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/092,560

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Ernesto E. Blanco

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EXAMINER

MACNEILL, ELIZABETH

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3767

NOTIFICATION DATE

DELIVERY MODE

05/07/2007

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/092,560

Applicant(s)

BLANCO, ERNESTO E.

Examiner

Elizabeth R. MacNeill

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15, 17-20, 22-25, 27, 31-50, 91, 96-235 and 245-260 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15, 17-20, 22-25, 27, 31-50, 91, 96-235 and 245-260 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This action is in response to applicant's amendments submitted 21 March 2007.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 1-4, 32, 33, 113-118, 122-126, 143, 144, 147, 151, 152, 154, 155, 158, 161, 163, 212-217, 219, 220, 222-226, 228-230, 236-238, 240-244, 249-252, 255, 258 and 259 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The "cannula" of the specification is defined as element 2, which holds the tissue expanders 4, not the substantially planar blade as recited in the claims. Rather, penetrator hollow cylinder 13 carries the planar blades and hollow stem 17 carries the blade guards 3a. For the purposes of examination, element 13 will be interpreted as the cannula in the claims, while element 17 will be interpreted as the obturator in the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 23,24, 172, 173 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Danks et al (US 5,868,773).

Danks teaches a surgical device comprising a handle (40) with side horns (shown in Figures 7A and 7B) configured to be gripped; a cylinder penetrator which includes a cannula (18) and an obturator (15) slidably mounted in the cannula; and a substantially planar blade (81) mounted on the cannula; and a guard (51) mounted on the obturator; and an insufflation passageway (14); and a tissue expander (68); a locking mechanism (48). See Figures 2A and 5A-5D.

As to the cutting blade see Figures 5A-5D. It is also disclosed that "the blade 81 may have slight convex or concave curve" which would constitute a rounded tip (also see 78).

As to the blade guard see Figure 5D which shows guard 51 covering the distal tip of the blade and the edges of the blade, as well as having an edge angle which is smaller than the blade edge angle; see Figure 2A for the spring (21) (claims 17,) which pushes the guard

As to the insufflation and gas reservoir see the Abstract.

As to the check valve see Fig 2A, elements 43 and 38

As to the penetration monitor see Fig 2A for trigger 48, which can act as a penetration monitor to determine if the guard is locked or unlocked.

As to the locking mechanism see Fig 2A for element 48.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-15, 17-20, 22-25, 27,31-50, 91,96-235, 245-260 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Danks (US 5,868,773, "773") in view of Danks (5,607,440, "440").

Danks '773 teaches a surgical device comprising a handle (40) with side horns (shown in Figures 7A and 7B) configured to be gripped; a cylinder penetrator which includes a cannula (18) and an obturator (15) slidably mounted in the cannula; and a substantially planar blade (81) mounted on the cannula; and a guard (51) mounted on the obturator; and an insufflation passageway (14); and a tissue expander (68); a locking mechanism (48). See Figures 2A and 5A-5D.

As to the cutting blade see Figures 5A-5D. It is also disclosed that "the blade 81 may have slight convex or concave curve" which would constitute a rounded tip (also see 78).

As to the blade guard see Figure 5D which shows guard 51 covering the distal tip of the blade and the edges of the blade; see Figure 2A for the spring (21) (claims 17,) which pushes the guard

As to the insufflation and gas reservoir see the Abstract.

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As to the check valve see Fig 2A, elements 43 and 38

As to the penetration monitor see Fig 2A for trigger 48, which can act as a penetration monitor to determine if the guard is locked or unlocked.

As to the locking mechanism see Fig 2A for element 48.

Danks '773 does not teach a cutting blade with an edge angle smaller than the edge angle of the guard.

Danks '440 shows a trocar cutting blade (81) and a shield (15), which has a smaller edge angle than the cutting blade in plan view (Fig 7A-9B).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the shield and blade shapes of Danks '440 with the trocar of Danks '773 in order to provide a trocar wherein "it is possible for the blunt end 92 to cover the pointed distal end 87 of the blade 81 so that no additional penetration is possible, while still leaving portions of the sharpened edges 91 exposed. In this fashion, when the pointed distal end 87 of the blade 81 has penetrated the body cavity wall, but before the blade 81 is entirely through the wall, the blunt end 92 of the shield can move forward and be partially locked while still allowing the sharpened edges 91 of the pointed blade 81 to expand the incision in the body cavity wall so that the obturator and cannula may be introduced to communicate with the body cavity."

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-15, 17-20, 22-25, 27,31-50, 91,96-235, 245-260 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth R. MacNeill whose telephone number is (571)-272-9970. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00-3:30pm M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin Sirmons can be reached on (571)272-4965. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

ERM

*Elizabeth
MacNeill
4/27/07*

KEVIN C. SIRMONS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

Kevin C. Sirmons